

***National Assessment of Educational Progress***

***2011 Reading and Mathematics***

***Trial Urban District Assessment***

**Commissioner's Statement**  
**National Center for Education Statistics**

Today I am releasing the results of the NAEP 2011 Trial Urban District Assessment for reading and mathematics—what we call TUDA.

TUDA assesses the performance of public school students at the school district level. It is a collaboration involving the National Center for Education Statistics, or NCES, along with the National Assessment Governing Board, and the Council of the Great City Schools.

Participation in TUDA is voluntary. In 2011, 21 districts from around the country were invited to participate, and all 21 agreed to do so. Because the NAEP assessments are the same for the nation, the states, and the urban districts, NAEP serves as a common yardstick for comparison.

The number of participating districts has been growing steadily since the first TUDA in 2002, which assessed reading only. Both reading and mathematics have been assessed in subsequent TUDA assessments.

- In 2002, six urban school districts participated—Los Angeles, Houston, Atlanta, the District of Columbia, New York City, and Chicago.
- In 2003, we added San Diego, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Boston, and Cleveland.
- In 2005, we added Austin.
- In 2009, we added seven districts—Fresno in California, Miami-Dade in Florida, Jefferson County, Kentucky (which includes Louisville), as well as Milwaukee, Detroit, Baltimore City, and Philadelphia.
- In 2011, we added Albuquerque, Dallas, and Hillsborough County, Florida.

Our samples for the 2011 mathematics and reading assessments consisted of public school students at grades 4 and 8. The samples ranged in size from about 900 to 2,700 students per district per grade. The variation in sample size among districts is large because the districts themselves differ dramatically in size. For all participating districts, regardless of size, sample sizes are sufficient to provide reliable results for comparisons both over time and among districts.

We report average student performance in two ways: scale scores and percentages at or above achievement levels. NAEP scale scores indicate what students know and can do, and are reported on a scale ranging from zero to five hundred for mathematics and reading.

Achievement levels were developed by the National Assessment Governing Board. They set standards for what students should know and be able to do. For each subject and for each grade, the Governing Board has established standards for *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced* performance. Ultimately, the goal is to have all students performing at or above the *Proficient* level.

For the most part, district scores will be compared to the national average score for public school students and the average score for public school students in large cities—defined as those with a population of at least 250,000. When comparing scores and other NAEP results we only discuss differences that are statistically significant.

Trend data are available for the 18 districts that participated in TUDA prior to 2011.

The “Large City Average” is used for comparison purposes because the student populations of our large urban districts tend to vary from the national average. In addition, they often vary from one another. For example, about 16 percent of the nation’s students at grade 4 are Black; in our 21 districts, the percentages range from 2 to 87 percent, in Albuquerque and Baltimore City, respectively. Nationally, about 24 percent of fourth-graders are Hispanic. The TUDA district percentages range from 3 percent in Baltimore City to 75 in Los Angeles.

About 11 percent of students nationally are English language learners. The range in the TUDA districts is from 2 percent in Atlanta to 50 percent in Dallas.

For students in lower-income families, the national average is 52 percent. The range in the TUDA districts is from 52 percent in Charlotte to 100 percent in Cleveland.

In all four instances, the percentages for large cities are higher than the national percentages.

The National Assessment Governing Board has established NAEP inclusion goals for students with disabilities and English language learners—SD and ELL students. In each jurisdiction, the Governing Board’s goals are that NAEP should assess at least 95 percent of all sampled students and at least 85 percent of identified SD or ELL students.

Most TUDA districts met the 95 percent goal in 2011. However, many districts did not meet the 85 percent goal for identified SD students in reading or mathematics. More districts met this goal with respect to ELL students.

#### **Grade 4 Mathematics**

In 2011, the average grade 4 mathematics score for public school students in the nation was 240. The large city average of 233 was lower than the national average.

Three districts—Austin, Charlotte, and Hillsborough County—had higher scores than both large cities and the nation.

Eight districts scored higher than large cities—the three mentioned above plus Boston, Houston, Jefferson County, Miami-Dade, and San Diego.

Ten districts had scores in 2011 that were lower than either the national or the large city average.

Results for 18 districts in 2011 can be compared with results from 2009.

Four districts—Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore City, and Philadelphia—had higher scores in 2011 than 2009. Scores for the other 14 districts did not change significantly.

Both the national and large city average increased since 2009 as well.

Results in 2011 can be compared to those in 2003 for the 10 districts that participated in both those years. There were increases for all of these districts except Cleveland, where the average score did not change significantly.

When comparing the percentage of students at or above *Basic* between the TUDA districts and large cities, nine districts were higher than the large city percentage. They are Charlotte, Austin, Hillsborough County, Houston, Boston, San Diego, Dallas, Miami-Dade, and Jefferson County.

Two districts—Albuquerque and New York City—were not significantly different from the large city percentage.

The remaining 10 districts were lower than the large city percentage.

Keep in mind that all of the districts had students performing at *Proficient* or *Advanced*, ranging from about 48 percent in Charlotte to about 3 percent in Detroit.

Looking at achievement-level results for the 10 districts that have participated in TUDA since 2003, we see improvements for all of the districts except Cleveland.

The percentage of students below *Basic* has dropped for 9 of the 10 districts.

The percentage at *Basic* has increased for three districts—Atlanta, the District of Columbia, and Los Angeles—and decreased in San Diego.

The percentage at *Proficient* increased for eight districts—all except Charlotte and Cleveland.

The percentage at *Advanced* increased for eight districts—all except Los Angeles and Cleveland.

In Atlanta and the District of Columbia, percentages increased at *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced* compared to 2003.

Among the information asked in NAEP of teachers is their educational background and number of years of teaching experience. In nine TUDA districts, at least 10 percent of grade 4 students had teachers who had an undergraduate degree with an emphasis on mathematics. Overall, the percentages ranged from 26 percent in Detroit to 3 percent in Fresno, Hillsborough County, and San Diego. Nationally, the percentage was 7 percent.

Nationally, 48 percent of students had a teacher with a master's degree. For the districts, the percentages ranged from 84 percent in New York City to 25 percent in Fresno.

Teacher experience also varies widely among the TUDA districts. About 16 percent of students nationally had a teacher with 4 or fewer years teaching experience. That percentage ranges from 2 percent in Cleveland to 31 percent in Charlotte. Nationally, 24 percent of students had a teacher with 20 or more years of teaching experience. Among the districts, the percentages ranged from 46 percent in Cleveland to 13 percent in Baltimore City and Hillsborough County.

### **Grade 8 Mathematics**

In grade 8, the average mathematics score for public school students in the nation was 283. The large city average of 274 was lower than the national average.

Two districts—Austin and Charlotte—had higher scores than either average.

Six districts scored higher than large cities—the two already shown, plus Boston, Hillsborough County, Houston, and San Diego.

Ten districts had scores in 2011 that were lower than both the national and the large city averages.

Performance in the 18 districts that participated in 2009 can be compared to their performance in 2011.

Six districts—Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, Detroit, the District of Columbia, and Jefferson County—had higher scores in 2011 than 2009. Scores for the other 12 districts did not change significantly.

Both the national and large city average also increased since 2009.

Ten districts can be compared back to 2003. There were increases compared to 2011 for all of the districts except Cleveland, where the average score did not change significantly.

For grade 8, the percentage of students performing at or above *Basic* for large cities was 63 percent: 37 percent at *Basic*, 20 percent at *Proficient*, and 6 percent at *Advanced*.

Comparing the districts to the percentage at or above *Basic* for the large cities, five districts were higher than the large city percentage. They are Austin, Charlotte, Hillsborough County, Houston, and Boston.

Seven districts—San Diego, Dallas, Albuquerque, Jefferson County, Miami-Dade, Chicago, and New York City—were not significantly different than the large city percentage.

The remaining nine districts were lower than the large city percentage.

We asked students about the mathematics courses they were taking in eighth grade. For example, nationally, 26 percent reported they were taking basic or general eighth-grade math, while 22 percent said they were taking introduction to algebra or pre-algebra, while 33 percent said they were taking algebra 1.

In the districts, the percentage who said they were taking basic or general eighth-grade math ranged from 54 percent in Austin to 3 percent in Hillsborough County and Los Angeles. The percentage taking introduction to algebra or pre-algebra ranged from 29 percent in Miami-Dade to 4 percent in Hillsborough County. The percentage taking algebra 1 ranged from 77 percent in Hillsborough County to 11 percent in Atlanta.

Now I'll describe student performance in reading for the 21 TUDA districts.

### **Grade 4 Reading**

In 2011, the average grade 4 reading score for public school students in the nation was 220. The large city average of 211 was lower than the national average.

Three districts—Charlotte, Hillsborough County, and Jefferson County—had higher scores than either of these averages.

Eight districts scored higher than large cities—the three named above, plus Austin, Boston, Miami-Dade, New York City, and San Diego.

The other 10 districts had scores in 2011 that were lower than either the national or the large city average.

When examining changes in scores over time, we find that scores did not change significantly from 2009 to 2011 in any of the 18 districts that participated prior to the current year. This was also true for the national and large city averages.

When comparing scores back to 2002, six districts participated. There were increases compared to 2011 for all six districts.

The 2011 reading achievement level results show that the percentage at or above *Basic* for large cities was about 55 percent—32 percent at *Basic*, 18 percent at *Proficient*, and 5 percent at *Advanced*.

Comparing the districts to the percentage at or above *Basic* for large cities, we find that eight districts were higher than the large city percentage. They are Hillsborough County, Charlotte, Austin, Jefferson County, Miami-Dade, Boston, New York City, and San Diego.

Three districts—Houston, Atlanta, and Albuquerque—were not significantly different from the large city percentage.

The remaining 10 districts were lower than the large city percentage.

### **Grade 8 Reading**

In 2011, the average score for public school students in the nation was 264. The large city average of 255 was lower than the national average.

No district had a higher score than the national average.

Five districts scored higher than large cities—Austin, Charlotte, Hillsborough County, Jefferson County, and Miami-Dade.

Ten districts had scores in 2011 that were lower than both the national and the large city averages. Six districts had scores that were not significantly different from the large city average.

When comparing results in 2011 with 2009, for the 18 districts that participated prior to the current year, we find that one district—Charlotte—had a higher score in 2011 than 2009. Scores for the other districts did not change significantly. Both the national and large city average scores increased since 2009.

Three of five districts that participated in 2002 show increases compared to 2011. Those districts were Atlanta, Houston, and Los Angeles.

In 2011, percentage at or above *Basic* at grade 8 for large cities was 65 percent—42 percent at *Basic*, 21 percent at *Proficient*, and 2 percent at *Advanced*.

Comparing the districts to the percentage at or above *Basic* for the large cities, five districts were higher than the large city percentage. They are Charlotte, Hillsborough County, Austin, Miami-Dade, and Jefferson County.

Seven districts—San Diego, New York City, Albuquerque, Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, and Boston—were not significantly different from the large city percentage.

The remaining nine were lower than the large city percentage.

We asked students about how often they read for fun on their own time. Nationally, 33 percent answered “Never or hardly ever,” while 18 percent said “Almost every day.” The large city percentages were 29 and 16 percent.

In the districts, the percentage who said they never or hardly ever read for fun ranged from 40 percent in Fresno to 17 percent in Chicago. The percentage saying they read almost every day ranged from 19 percent in Chicago, the District of Columbia, and Jefferson County to 9 percent in Dallas.

That completes my overview of results from the 2011 TUDA mathematics and reading assessments. There is much more information in the two Report Cards, most of which are devoted to individual profiles of each of the 21 districts. In addition, the initial release website will give you extensive information on the performance of students in each

district, access to released assessment questions through NAEP's Question Center, and use of the NAEP Data Explorer, our online data-analysis tool.

In closing, I would like to thank the students, schools, and districts who participated in these assessments. Thank you very much.